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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1909.

President Taft on the Tariff.

President Taft is manifestly apprehensive concerning the effect of tariff revision on business and on the government revenues. His message therefore urges upon Congress expedition in the passage of the new tariff bill and a due consideration in the framing of schedules of the necessities of the Treasury. Both phases of tariff revision are important, and have been in the mind of Congressional leaders from the first. We have no fear that Congress will for a moment lose sight of either aspect of the tariff situation. Such reports as have come from the Ways and Means Committee room have indicated that the question of revenue has been very carefully considered, and that the forthcoming bill will be not only a protective measures, but also a revenue-producer. Of the desire of the Congressional managers at both ends of the Capitol for quick action on the new bill there is every evidence, so that Mr. Taft was well advised in "venturing to suggest" that Congress dispose of the tariff per the general understanding. He is on safe and conservative ground so far.

We are disposed to regret, however, that Mr. Taft has chosen to be so dreadfully conservative as not to hazard a single constructive recommendation. We look in vain through the perfunctory phrases of this brief document for any recognition of the demand of the consuming masses for relief from the exorbitant exactions of protected industries or for any suggestion that duties should be reduced for the benefit of those who buy. We note, also, the total absence of any reference to a tariff commission, which the President theoretically favors. It is true that Mr. Taft has heretofore spoken a fair word for the consumer, and that his inaugural address, to which he now refers us for further particulars, is in its general tone favorable to a liberal revision of the tariff downward, with special reference to curing its inequalities and enhancing its revenue-producing capacity. But in his actual communication to Congress, the country cannot fail to note.

Mr. Taft has apparently forborne the assumption of leadership in tariff revision by casting the whole burden upon Congress. His sole interest now is that the job shall be done quickly, with an eye single to the business and manufacturing interests. There is no doubt that these interests will be pleased with the temper of the message. It forbodes a readjustment of tariff schedules that shall place their prosperity above all other considerations, moral and economic. However, that is the way the Republican party always revises the tariff.

We fear Mr. Taft will sometimes feel like stepping out into the back yard and kicking something in the slats, too, before this cruel tariff war is ended.

Liberia.

There will be more than a little interest taken in the work of the commission which will be appointed—the money for it having been appropriated by the last Congress—for the purpose of inquiring into the affairs of Liberia. For some time now this rather visionary negro republic in Africa has been out of the public eye, but enough has been known to show that its affairs were in a bad state and that to all intents and purposes the Liberian republic is a failure.

The Liberian republic was originally designed as a place of refuge for the negroes of the United States who desired to try an experiment in self-government. The place never proved very attractive to the American negro. Only a few thousands went there, and the descendants of these in Liberia to-day number considerably less than thirty thousand. Little progress toward any stable and permanent form of government has been made.

The territory of Liberia includes several powerful tribes of African savages, and the American negroes have been quite unable to maintain order among these or to prevent them from becoming an annoyance and a menace to the adjoining territories belonging to France and England. We may be quite sure that the British government, which at times has worked strenuously in an effort to aid the Liberians to govern themselves, will welcome the prospect of American intervention in Liberian affairs, which seems to be promised by the appointment of the commission.

Surely it is to be hoped that the commission will work with caution in its interference in Liberian affairs. There are some who know the situation who think it not unlikely that the investigations of the commission may result in the United States government taking over the Liberian republic as a dependency, an obligation most sedulously to be avoided. We should have no such warrant for an experiment in colonization in Africa as we had either in Cuba or the Philippines. For many years Liberia has been an entirely independent state, and although the founders of the Liberian republic undoubtedly were from America, that, we believe, is hardly sufficient reason for our interfering in the affairs of the mismanaged republic. If there is to be any hope for the future of the Liberian republic it will probably lie in the partition of the country between its neighbors, England and France. As it is at present, Liberia is a sore spot on the map of Africa, and as an independent government the European nations having African colonies would be glad to see it eradicated. But it is hard to see that there is any political or moral obligation on the part of the American government to interfere.

"The administration is to be one of peace on earth and good will toward men," says Mr. Bellamy Storer. And it is not probable that Mr. Storer ever was in position before to enjoy a thing of that kind so thoroughly.

American Shipping.

It will be with some chagrin that the men who have been persistently hammering at Congress in an effort to secure some form of ship subsidy will read the report of the United States Commissioner of Navigation, which shows an unexampled activity in American shipbuilding during the year ending June 30, 1908. According to the Commissioner's report, there were more vessels built in America during this period than in any previous year in the history of the nation. The total number of vessels built during the year was 1,457, with a gross tonnage of 614,216. To find a year even approximating this, it is necessary to go back more than fifty years—to 1855, when the gross tonnage reached 583,450 for the year.

There has been a general belief that America, in the matter of its merchant marine, was very far behind all the other first-class nations, but the Commissioner's report absolutely contradicts this impression, showing that the aggregate documented merchant shipping of the country at the close of the fiscal year was 24,425 vessels, having a gross tonnage of 7,355,440, which not only exceeds all the past records of the United States, but is surpassed only by Great Britain. Germany, for instance, has only 2,173 vessels, with a tonnage of 4,232,145.

The American merchant marine is unique in this, that by far the greater part of the gross tonnage is employed in our coastwise trade, on the Western rivers, and on the Great Lakes. In spite of our many ships, it is still true that the American flag flying from merchant vessels is an unaccustomed sight at the great foreign ports of the world. At the close of last year, only five American steamships were engaged in oversea trade on the Atlantic, and we had six steamships in the Pacific trade.

We carry on a brisk trade with South American ports, but unfortunately all of this is carried in foreign bottoms.

The American merchant fleet may broadly be divided into 10,926 steam vessels and 10,300 sailing ships. Seventeen thousand two hundred and forty-one of our sea-going vessels were at the time of the Commissioner's report in use on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts; on the Great Lakes 3,172 were employed, and there were 3,196 on the Pacific coast.

Three hundred more vessels were built in the year 1908 than in the year before, and of this number, 192 were steamships. Thus, it is to be noted that the shipbuilding industry in America is far from obsolete. It is plain from these figures that the industry has little or no excuse for asking for protection in the form of subsidies. Whenever our merchants shall find it more profitable to send their wares to foreign markets in American-built bottoms we may be quite certain that American shipbuilders will meet all the demands made upon them.

In the meantime, foreign ships—English, French, and German—are carrying our wares to the four corners of the earth much more cheaply than we could ourselves; and, after all, the main thing is to get the American product to market.

"Uncle Joe" still sits tight in the Speaker's chair, all right—but he doubtless realizes it has been wabbling some of late, nevertheless.

A Breach in the House Rules.

Upon the whole, those who favor a revision of the House rules have much to be grateful for in the outcome of Monday's attack on the organization. If not so much was accomplished as had been hoped, at least the impeccable and sacrosanct rules have been changed in several particulars favorable to the minority and to the independent member. What Speaker Cannon on Saturday night called "a system of rules the most efficient that ever guided a legislative body;" a system that Mr. Dalzell pronounced the embodiment of the "wisdom of the best and most accomplished statesmanship" of the last two decades in the same breath that he confessed the justice and the desirability of the amendments proposed by Mr. Fitzgerald—this system has been altered so as to reduce the power of the Speaker and increase that of the members over legislation. Significantly enough, the change was forced down the throats of the House organization, unable for the first time in many years to control the full Republican majority. Moreover, but for the defection of more than a score of Democrats from the leadership of Champ Clark the autocratic power of the Speaker would have been given a damaging blow by depriving him of the appointment of the Committee on Rules. It was a dearly bought victory for the adherents of the old order of things, and promises a more liberal treatment of the rules question for the future.

What are the new features of the rules adopted on Monday? In the first place, the practice of going to the Speaker's room to secure permission for the calling up of a bill under unanimous consent is abolished. If the Speaker dislikes the legislation in question, he will have the same right of objection as any other member, but he cannot squelch it in the privacy of his chamber. In the second place, the weekly day for the consideration of measures on the calendar, which was established by amendment of the rules at the last session, is further safeguarded by providing that it can be set aside only by a vote of two-thirds. Finally, the motion to recommit has been restored to its original purpose, that of giving members a right to test the sense of the House on a measure of which they do not fully approve, and to secure its reconsideration and amendment, instead of being compelled to vote it down in entirety—a right which has been denied under the gag system of jamming measures through without amendment. There remains the power of the Speaker to appoint the committees, the crux of the whole situation. Whether this power should be transferred to a committee of selection, as in the British House of Commons, or whether it should be granted the Speaker under some form of restriction, are matters as to which honest men may differ. It is evident that a majority of the House cannot at present be obtained for so radical a proposal as depriving the Speaker of his privilege of naming committees. But the evolution of the House rules, now that their tendency to accentuate autocratic control of the House has suffered a check, should be toward maintaining the ideal of a truly representative and deliberative body. The point at issue has been well stated by Mr. Murdock, of Kansas:

"It is this: Has the House of Representatives surrendered to one of its members all its power and its original importance in the democracy? No man can serve here six years without knowing that when the electrical word passes through this chamber that 'the Speaker wants it,' that thing is carried; and if the equally electrical word passes through here that the Speaker does not want it, it is beaten. These are plain, simple things that come into the lives of all of us here. They argue one thing, namely, that this House has surrendered its power to one man. You cannot get any power back to yourself as a member on this floor, as a Representative, unless you go to the sole place where it is lodged, and that is with the Speaker. He holds that power largely, but not wholly, by reason of committee appointments. And just as sure as I am standing here, no matter what the action may be here to-day, the American people are going to see that the American Congress takes to itself again this, a measure of its own power, in order that it may become finally representative, as it was intended it should be."

No one wants a return to conditions under which the transaction of business is impossible owing to factious opposition, nor is there any real ground of objection to such a control of the parliamentary situation as will enable the House to reach definite conclusions upon important legislative propositions; but the steady concentration of all legislative authority in the hands of the Speaker and a few chosen lieutenants, and the persistent suppression of the rights of the minority to reasonable opportunity for debate and amendment, have no reason for being in a parliamentary body representative of a democratic people.

St. Patrick's Day in the morning!

President Taft's first Congressional message was short, but not noticeably ugly, we think.

Another suit has been commenced in the United States courts against the Standard Oil Company. "Uncle Sam" certainly has the courage of his convictions in respect of that concern, anyway.

Mr. Alfred Henry Lewis' failure to find any of his books among those Mr. Roosevelt will carry to Africa may be, after all, only a surface indication of poor taste. Perhaps the former President has the entire collection of Mr. Lewis' efforts nicely tucked away in that wonderful Roosevelt memory.

A contemporary says that Mr. Clark's "fighting name is Champ." The "Beau" end of it is reserved for social use exclusively, we presume.

The French government has decorated Gen. Leonard Wood. Some sort of domestic decorative provision should be made for our Ananias Club immunes, we suspect.

A Buffalo stenographer was recently arrested for stealing a dictionary. She should be sentenced to study it diligently for two or three years.

It has been figured that Mr. Taft traveled 202,114 miles during the past nine years. Still, he wound up at the White House; which must have been satisfactory enough.

Prosperity is probably waiting for Congress to say the word "Go."

"Gentlemen, let's all have a little," said the Rome (Ga.) Tribune-Herald of Friday last. If that did not start a swelling chorus of I-don't-care-if-I-dos, we miss our guess.

The Nashville American thinks we have too much law. We are not sure that is the trouble. Perhaps it is merely that we have too little real respect for the law.

A prominent member of the Rothschild family says there will be no war in the Balkans. As a war prophet, too, we believe we have more confidence in a Rothschild than a Hobson, as a general proposition.

Mr. Platt says "Mr. Roosevelt will never be heard from again politically." But if he is, however, it is not probable the former Senator will be called on to explain himself.

"Splendid business chance if taken at once. Go to Washington, D. C., and get a hotelkeeper into a poker game," advises the Milwaukee Sentinel. Remember, nevertheless, "discretion is the better part of valor." It might be well to provide yourself a return-trip ticket.

"Does Postmaster General Hitchcock wear nothing but a silk hat?" inquires the Denver Post. Oh, yes, indeed. On occasions, for instance, Mr. Hitchcock wears a most engaging smile.

We fear Mr. Taft will sometimes feel like stepping out into the back yard and kicking something in the slats, too, before this cruel tariff war is ended.

A bill has been introduced in the Illinois legislature making a man legally incapable of entering into a marriage contract if he has been intoxicated twice during the year previous. This will not affect the interesting section of male humanity that accumulates an overload somewhere along the line and makes it a continuous performance ever thereafter, of course.

Well, well, well! An Albany (N. Y.) man actually acknowledges that he was not perfectly sure one year ago that William Howard Taft would be nominated and elected President of the United States.

We hope those Cooper jurymen will not think the attorney for the defense meant any harm in addressing them as "intelligent and discriminating umpires."

We have an idea "Uncle Joe's" sense of hearing has been considerably improved, notwithstanding.

An Ohio judge has decided that it is not unlawful to sell liquor in the middle of a stream passing through "dry" territory. We fear this ruling may produce an amphibious population throughout some sections of the country.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

A GENTLE MAN.

St. Patrick was a gentle man; a gentle, kindly man.
To conquer fame
Was not his aim,
His purpose, or his plan.

We know him as a gentle man; and 'tis enough, I wis,
To do one's part
With kindly heart.
What better aim than this?

Handicapped.

"I think there must be something in a name, after all."

"Why so?"

"I notice that all the eight-syllabled animals are now extinct."

Quite So.

"I dropped considerable money at the track to-day."

"Well, you helped improve the breed of horses."

"Yes; and after a man has picked six straight losers, he feels that the breed needs improving."

A Foolish Trick.

"Say, Si, your hired man has just fell off the barn."

"That's a foolish trick. He can't kill more 'n two or three minutes' time by it, and he might break a leg."

In Line.

The buds will soon be flaring
Forth, I ween.
Spring's ready for the wearing
Of the green.

In Dreamland.

"My head clerk wants to marry my daughter. I s'pose I'll have to consent. Well, I'm sure he loves her."

"How do you know?"

"Look at him, yonder, staring into vacancy with his mouth open."

We Mortals.

"Some experience is dearly bought."

"Well?"

"And some we acquire quite reasonably. Striking an average, I guess we have no kick."

So It Goes.

"All the world's a stage."

"Yes; and the populace, citizens, and villagers always figure in small type at the bottom of the programme."

CONSULS AND POLITICS.

Is Administration Paving Way for Jobs for Favorites?

From the New York Journal of Commerce.

After the lapse of nearly three years, during which the consular service has been far less dependent upon politics than at any time in the recent past, there now appears to be a prospect of re-establishing the system of place-mongering and jobbery which existed up to very recently. The consular examination which was to have been held on March 15 has been indefinitely deferred, and the designations for this examination have been canceled. Whether the persons who were to have been examined will be redesignated or not is an open and extremely doubtful question. Moreover, it is by no means settled whether or not there will be further consular examinations. Thus the whole attempt at a merit system in this branch of the public service seems to be again abandoned, at least for the time being.

There is nothing illegal in the step which has been taken by the present administration. On the contrary, it might be said by the apologists that the authorities are really acting in accordance with the wishes of Congress, and in one sense entitled to approbation rather than blame. What President Roosevelt did, after Congress had defeated this consular reform bill three years ago, was to announce that, though the legislative might be unwilling to introduce reform methods by statute, the Executive still retained the power to make appointments as he pleased. Congress could refuse to make a civil service method mandatory, but the President could employ that system in selecting his men. This was the basis for the White House order under which consular aspirants were directed to undergo an examination that has been made more and more stringent as time has gone on. While it is true that the more important places in the service had all been filled with political favorites before the new order was issued, it is also a fact that a very considerable number of appointments have been made to the minor posts. Enough has been done to show how the merit system would operate. That this system—vitiated as it has been by political methods of designation—has been an unqualified success so far as it has had a fair trial would probably be too much to assert, but it is equally certain that under it there has been an immense improvement over the older plan. The appointees have been better representatives of the United States and have done vastly better work. This is why there will be a disappointment on the part of the business public if any reaction is allowed to occur.

Inheritance Taxation.

From the Indianapolis News.

The right of the United States or of any State to impose an inheritance tax is unquestioned, provided such laws do not make unjust discriminations or violate the Constitution in other respects. Congress may, if it sees fit, impose a national inheritance tax in addition to that now imposed by thirty-six States of the Union, just as it imposes a national tax on beer and distilled liquor in addition to State taxes. But the question is as to the necessity, policy, wisdom, and judiciousness of such a law. On that point we think that unless it can be shown conclusively that a national inheritance tax is necessary to enable the government to meet its expenitures, and wipe out the existing deficit. Congress should leave the inheritance tax to the States, most of which have already preempted the ground.

Give Us a Decent Day.

From the Atlanta Constitution.

Give the country a decent, safe day for Presidential inauguration, and the whole people will commend the action. Further Congressional inattention to this national duty will, in the light of the tragedies which March 4 has brought, border upon criminal neglect.

Nothing that He Could Help.

From the Chicago Record Herald.

Thomas C. Platt retires after having been for fifty-two years in political life. Can anybody recall anything he has done for the benefit of the public during that time?

FUTURITY.

My youth to me was like a lovely flower,
All flushed with crimson of its own delight,
Its flamelike petals poised as if for flight,
Ethereal child of changing sun and shower,
Of misty dawn and night.

My age to me is like a golden fruit
Whose quality and sweetness have been won
From earth's rough use—from alternating sun
And rain and that dark soil wherein my root
Invisibly has run.

My soul to me is like a ripening seed
Which holds the heart of all that went before—
The flamelike flower and golden fruit in store,
Close sealed, secure, in larger love and deed
To live and bloom once more.
—Helen A. Saxon, in Appleton's Magazine.

OLD CODE MUST PASS.

Revision of House Rules Only a Matter of Time.

From the New York Tribune.

So far as the rules of the House are concerned, we cannot see that they involve a political or partisan issue. The fight over the rules is not a fight between parties over the substance of legislation, but one between groups of members over the forms to be observed in preparing and passing legislation. The issue is between the consolidation of power in a few hands and its fairer distribution among the great mass of members. Under the old system the Speaker, once elected, became the master of the House. The heads of the chief committees, who worked with him, absorbed the lion's share of the favors which he had to bestow, and the great majority of the members had to be content with supernumerary parts, having little to do with legislation except to vote on roll calls. The Speaker theoretically represents one Congress district out of 391. But for most practical purposes his one vote in the House has constituted a majority.

The failure of the fight for a thorough amendment of the House code is to be regretted. But that fight has yielded practical results, since the House accepted yesterday several modifications of the rules prepared by Mr. Fitzgerald, of Brooklyn, who organized a Democratic secession, and thereby repaired the earlier defeat of the House organization. It has also been helpful in showing that, while the present system is still powerful enough to maintain itself, public feeling against it is growing. It cannot hold out much longer against the pressure of intelligent sentiment. We expect to see the liberalization of the House code, begun yesterday, carried much further in the next Congress. The rules will be on trial as never before, and members who have supported them, out of self-interest rather than from conviction, will be less likely to think that the old abolutism is impregnable, and therefore necessary. The old code will pass, and its passing will mark the beginning of an era of freer action, discussion, and individual development in the House of Representatives.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM.

British View of the Failure of Primary Schools.

Harold E. Gorst, in North American Review.

Children must not be sent to elementary schools to be taught without any preliminary investigation into their capabilities and tendencies, the knowledge which is supposed to be essential to the average member of the community. These schools have cost the country hundreds, perhaps thousands, of millions. It cannot be helped; but the sooner they are pulled down the better for the interests of the nation. However excellent the teaching, these schools are hotbeds for the wholesale destruction of the individuality upon which the future might and greatness of the nation is dependent. They are worse than useless, unless they can be rebuilt to fulfill the requirements of a new kind of institution—conceived on a far broader basis, both constructively and educationally—in which the sound principles of a genuine education can be carried into effect. For it is not in schools of the existing type that measures can be taken to study the individual bent of the child. This can only be done by the provision within the dimensions of one great institution of such scope for individual capacity as would cover the whole range of productive activity. There must be workshops of various kinds, laboratories, kitchens, gardens, and where practicable, even a farm. Every broad sphere of activity will have, as far as possible, to be represented. The children will thus be turned loose into a real world full of interests, where they will not be subjected to mental and physical repression, and where their tastes will have full opportunity to develop and reveal themselves. Placed under skilled direction, it would not be difficult, in the course of a comparatively brief period, to ascertain broadly the capabilities of each child.

A certain percentage would doubtless display a natural inclination toward a purely literary training; but the vast majority, showing capacity for more practical and active spheres, would eventually have to be drafted off into schools of a new type, according to their individual necessities. These institutions would divide themselves naturally into broad, distinctive groups, each group containing its own complement of schools and colleges. For instance, one group might embrace scholarship and scientific research; a second engineering and other mechanical occupations; a third art and the decorative trades; a fourth farming and agriculture; a fifth industry, commerce, and finance, and so on. Every normal child would be found to belong, by predisposition, to some broad sphere of activity. It would therefore be the duty of the educators in the great selecting institutions first to discover the individual bent of the child, and then to recommend to the parents the course of special training to which he ought to be subjected. Probably enough, many existing technical colleges and other educational establishments would, with certain modifications, be readily adaptable to the giving of this special training, divided, as suggested above, into broad, distinctive groups.

Mr. Pinchot and the Tariff.

From the Kansas City Star.

Mr. Pinchot's argument seems to be answered by the lumbermen themselves. If the tariff is so inconsequential, if its removal would be so immaterial, why have the lumber interests maintained for many weeks a powerful and costly lobby in Washington? Why have they labored with the Ways and Means Committee without ceasing? Why have they besought, with the heaviest pressure at their command, to enlist Mr. Pinchot on their side? Why did they recently give a banquet to about 150 members of Congress to impress upon them the importance—to the lumber business—of retaining the present duty or increasing it? And why, in the name of reason, did they prevail on the framers of the tentative bill to make the duty even larger than it is at present, if the possibility of imports are inconsequential?

The Marrying American.

From Success Magazine.

It seems that Uncle Sam became interested in this marriage question, and sent his patient census enumerators to all the tying-up places in the country to find out what they could. The results are astonishing. During the last twenty years almost 26,000,000 bridegrooms and brides walked up to the altar—13,000,000 handsome swains with 13,000,000 blushing brides on their arms. The American is a marying man, much more than is the Englishman, the Frenchman, the German, the Russian, the Austrian, the Italian, the Spaniard, the Swede, or, in fact, than any European except the Hungarian.

Fine Topic for Discussion.

From the Richmond Times Dispatch.

It is an open question hereabouts whether a clubbing proposition between The Outlook and Watson's Jeffersonian Weekly would or would not pull more subscribers than a similar arrangement between The Commoner and La Follette's Magazine.

It Perished, Anyway.

From the Chicago News.

One cannot say properly that the postal savings bank bill died in the Sixtieth Congress of inanition. A truthful coroner's jury would declare that it was strangled.

MRS. TAFT AS TRAVELER.

The New Lady of the White House Is a Globetrotter.

From Human Life for March.

In Mrs. Taft's tally of miles she easily outstrips the wives of all other American Presidents since that historic day when Liberty bell rang out its famous message from the tower of Independence Hall. She has seen moonlight nights on the broad waters of the Pacific from the bridge of that monster ship, the Minnesota; she has watched the dirt fly at the big ditch down in the Panama country, and she has risked her life on the trans-Siberian Railway, in that 6,000-mile dash across the gigantic width of Asia, which the Czar planned as a spectacular affair to catch the world's attention. She has fished in the royal lake at Oshiba, where the Taft party was quartered in one of the Mikado's palaces during its Japanese visit; she has danced the queer native rigidon in the Philippine; over the snows of St. Petersburg she has had, fur-bundled, sleigh rides, such as only Russia knows; and to beguile trans-Atlantic hours she has played shuffleboard with that gold-braided gentleman, the captain, whose word is law on the liner.

On practically all of his missions as a popular peace envoy, Mrs. Taft has accompanied her husband. In the matter of distance this would mean more miles than one would care to figure, for no American, outside of the navy, has ever covered so much of the earth's surface in behalf of the government as the new President.

FITZGERALD A FIGHTER.

Something About Man Who Turned the Trick Monday.

Washington Correspondence New York Herald.

Representative John J. Fitzgerald, Democrat of Brooklyn, N. Y., became the most famous man in Congress. In the course of three hours he firmly placed himself in the front rank of parliamentary fighters, putting to flight his own party leader, and forcing the Republican majority to follow him in adopting the most important amendments made to the rules of the House of Representatives during many years of Republican rule.

Moreover, by his astute knowledge of the rules themselves, and of parliamentary practice, he brought to a close in one afternoon a chaotic fight which threatened to delay indefinitely the introduction of the Payne tariff bill, and to hold in check the consideration of tariff legislation which is the sole cause for the meeting of the Sixty-first Congress, now, and is what the depressed business world is waiting for.

The little Brooklyn Representative has dark red hair, and he wears glasses. He speaks slowly, sometimes as though he did not know what the next word would be. But those who have watched his progress in the House since he was sent to Washington through the aid of Patrick H. McCarren, ten years ago, to represent what is now the Seventh New York district, are not surprised.

For several years he has been a member of the Appropriation Committee, the most important in the House, and has borne a part in the debate over the big supply bills. He has made capital for the Democrats steadily, always penetrating the majority's armor at the many vulnerable points which extravagant administration has created.

He is a good fighter—that was shown to-day when several of the Democratic hotspurs were attacking from all sides. He never allowed himself to be ruffled; was always courteous in his replies.

ASPECTS OF TRAMP PROBLEM.

More Than Half a Million Vagrants in the Country.

Gustavus Myers, in Review of Reviews.

The tramp question has been for fifty years an apparently unsolvable one in America. It need hardly be said that the administration of law has not been able to cope with it. Workhouses, jails, and prisons have not diminished the number of tramps. Charitable societies long ago gave up in despair all idea of attempting to settle the question, either by the ordinary or extraordinary methods of charity. To the railroads the tramp problem has been an ever-present and a very serious one. It is estimated that the railroad corporations of the United States suffer an annual loss of $25,000,000 by reason of the depredations, intentional or unintentional, of the army of tramps. This, at any rate, was the estimate made by Maj. Pangborn, representing President Murray, of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, at the national conference of charities and corrections, at Minneapolis, in June, 1907.

This $25,000,000 yearly loss represents property destroyed or taken in one form or another. The losses are continuous from explosions or flames due to careless lighting of fires by tramps. Robberies, obstruction of tracks, interference with signals, stopping of trains, injuring and frequent killing of employes, and wrecks which entail large immediate loss and heavy suits for damages—these are some of the disastrous results of the doings of tramps. The immense number of tramps trespassing upon railroads, and the fatalities which overtake many of them, can be judged from the fact that in a period of five years recently 23,964 trespassers were killed and 25,236 injured while stealing rides on railroads. Most of them were tramps.

It is conservatively estimated that there is an army of at least 500,000 tramps in the United States. This figure is calculated by taking as a basis the number of tramps killed on the railroads every year and multiplying it by the proportion of train men killed in the year compared to the total number of train men employed. But it is entirely probable that the number at present reaches nearer 1,000,000 than 500,000. The recent industrial depression added large accessions. Reports from railway agents throughout the country show that never in the history of the railroads was so large a number of tramps met with.

A large proportion are youths ranging from sixteen to twenty-one years of age. Beginning with a yearning for adventure, about one-half quit the nomadic life and return home, or settle down, while the remaining half become inveterate tramps and gradually tend from vagrancy into a career of crime or semicrime. A very large percentage of tramps, however, are adults, and comprise every species, from men who will not work or who have become chronically unfitted for work, to those who are innocent victims of downright adversity.

The Best Way Out.

From the Baltimore Sun.

In this matter of readjusting taxation and levying new taxes the Republican party is walking on thin ice. The pocket nerve is sensitive, and any serious jar to that sensitive organ is sure to cause resentment at the polls. Possibly the best plan at the extra session would be to substitute some revenue tariff rates for prohibitory rates, and then let Congress cut the coat according to the cloth and limit appropriations to the income of the government. With a revision along this line, returning business activity would produce abundant revenue.

Dress Reform.

From the Milwaukee Sentinel.

Collarless coats are threatened and we trust the summer will see the restoration of cuffless trousers.

A Cruel Parent.

From the Brooklyn Eagle.

The tariff is the mother-in-law of the consumers.

AT THE HOTELS.

"If President Roosevelt could only be induced to accept the nomination as mayor of New York, he would indeed confer a blessing on the citizens and taxpayers of that great community," said Chester F. Turner, a lawyer of New York, at the New Willard last night.

"With one or two terms with Roosevelt at the head of municipal affairs in New York, something like honesty and square dealing would be established in official life of New York. He would not rest until all the graft which is now permeating every department of the city government was eradicated. We need a man of Roosevelt's type; a man who is not afraid to use the big stick when and where it is necessary, and who withal gives a square deal to everybody.

"Col. Roosevelt's great services to this country will be more fully appreciated by generations to come," added Mr. Turner, "too many of his enemies are in power to-day to permit of his true character becoming known. President Taft is indeed a worthy successor of Roosevelt and he will continue in the latter's path; may be not quite as demonstrative, but nevertheless just as determined as Roosevelt. There seems to be a general impression among New York business people and financiers that this country will experience one of the most prosperous periods in all its history."

"A greater number of persons than ever are now wearing eyeglasses or spectacles," said Dr. Eugene G. Winter, of Boston, who was seen at the Arlington last night. "Up to a short time ago the demand for lenses was so great that the manufacturers were swamped with orders, and it was feared in this country that there would be a serious dearth of lenses. All of the glass that is used in the optical business is imported. The greater part of it comes from Germany, the rest is made in England. It seems that American glass manufacturers have thus far been unable to produce glass of the requisite quality for the eyeglasses.

"The greatest defect in American eyesight is its inability to see at great distances. The majority of persons who wear eyeglasses or spectacles are nearsighted. Even those born with perfect eyes have been forced before they are very old to resort to glasses that they may see everything going on. This myopia is due almost entirely to the artificial conditions that surround a human being in this present age almost from his very babyhood.

"As cities increase in size and as the conveniences that are offered in any one city increases, so does the value of real estate increase. And with the rise in realty values, the height of buildings increases and partitions become more numerous. Skyscrapers are effective obstructions to long ranges of vision. The more or less vivid and tiresome colorings of their walls have usurped in man's vision the place of the restful and unfathomable blue of the sky. The apartments in these new buildings are of smaller dimensions than those in the old-fashioned buildings, for the air space allotted to each and every person in the community must be curtailed to make the investment on the building in any way profitable. In consequence, modern persons become accustomed to none but short distances. It makes no difference whether one be employed all day in a small office, poring over a set of books, or whether he is hurrying about the city streets, he can not see very far about him. And even in his home, the walls of his room have been grouped more closely about him.

"The fish that were found in the stream of the Mammoth Cave were discovered to be totally blind, although they at one time did possess sight. The same law that was operative in depriving these fish of their sight is operative to-day in the great congested centers of modern civilization, and it is only a question of time when the eyes of those who are compelled to work in artificial light all day long will become so unaccustomed to daylight that blinders will have to be resorted to."

Speaking of Germany's efforts to secure foreign markets, Henry Tilford, of Berlin, who is at the Shoreham, said last night that in no other country is banking capital so largely, so skillfully, and so effectively used to develop and sustain manufacturing industries, and to market their products in foreign commerce, as in Germany.

"A large, enterprising, and steadily growing merchant marine," continued the American, who is engaged in business in the Kaiser's capital, "carries the products of German industry to every part of the inhabited globe. The united influences of the government, the powerful sale and trade syndicates, and of the capitalists who found banks and finance railways in new countries, are all intelligently and and systematically exerted to give Germany a front place in the list of exporting nations.

"As Germany has been clever and enterprising in adopting and making the best use of improved methods and machinery from abroad, so the nations which, like the United States, must meet this competition in the world's markets, will find it needful to imitate her methods in much that relates to thoroughness in specialized education, in the art of adapting and selling goods to alien people, and to high service in everything that pertains to development and maintenance of foreign trade."

Carroll G. Harmon, of San Francisco, who is at the Shoreham, talked interestingly last night of a tour he made of Cairo's schools.

"An Arab school," said Mr. Harmon, "is one of the most interesting places in Cairo to visit. The children, with the schoolmaster, sit upon the floor or the ground in a semi-circle, and each has a tablet of wood which is painted white, and upon which the lessons are written. When the latter are learned they are washed out and replaced by other lessons.

"During study hour the Arab schools remind one of the Chinese, for the children all study aloud, and as they chant they rock back and forth like trees in a storm, and this movement is continued for an hour or more at a time. The schoolmaster rocks back and forth also, and altogether the school presents a most novel appearance, as well as sound. Worshipers in the mosques always move about while reciting the Koran, as this movement is believed to assist the memory.

"The desks of the Arab schools are old contrivances of palm sticks, upon which is placed the Koran or one of the thirty sections of it. After learning the alphabet the boys take up the study of the Koran, memorizing entire chapters of it until the sacred book is entirely familiar.

"A peculiar method is followed in learning the Koran. The study begins with the opening chapter, and from this it skips to the last. The last but one is then learned, then the last but two, and so on in inverted order, ending finally with the second chapter.

"During the student's progress it is customary for the schoolmaster to send on the wooden tablet a lesson painted in black and red and green to the father, who returns it after inspection with a couple of plasters pasted upon it. The salaries of the schoolmasters are very meager, indeed."

Resting.

From the Indianapolis News.

It is said that Mr. Loeb, who is now busily engaged making collections at the port of New York, is enjoying his vacation immensely.